



March 23, 2004

Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
Chairwoman, Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Snowe:

On behalf of the National Small Business Association, I would like to commend you for the introduction of the Small Business Loan Revitalization Act of 2004 (S. 2193). As you surely are aware, the SBA's 7(a) lending program has gone through a very tumultuous year, and your thoughtful solution to a difficult problem speaks volumes about your dedication to small business. NSBA is dedicated to supporting S. 2193 and continue our work in urging others to do the same.

Access to capital for small businesses has long been a top-priority issue for NSBA, and the continual disruption of the 7(a) program will only exacerbate the difficulty small businesses face in securing financing. As many in the industry mentioned as early as March of 2003, 7(a) funding was underestimated, leading to the January 2004 shut-down of the program. Though a variety of other solutions have been offered up by various interested parties, NSBA believes S. 2193 to be the best short-term solution to ensure continuance of the 7(a) program as we know it today.

NSBA stands behind the basic premise driving the SBA's 7(a) program – small businesses need help to start, run and grow. While some may point to success of other programs as a solution to the 7(a) funding shortfall, we contend that the 7(a) is and has been an incredible tool in economic development and job creation through the support of entrepreneurs. 7(a) is a unique program, one that cannot be matched or replicated by any other program in existence, and should not be slowly chipped-away.

I would like to personally thank you and your staff on behalf on NSBA's members across the country who have benefited from the 7(a) program. Those people that received the loan, those that were hired by the recipient, those who live in a thriving community due to the creation and/or expansion of a business all benefit from the 7(a) program. Your keen understanding of the issue and strong support of the program are greatly appreciated, from K Street to Main Street.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd McCracken", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Todd McCracken
President